PROFESSOR FRANK CHALK
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY/CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, AND
DIRECTOR, MONTREAL INSTITUTE FOR GENOCIDE AND HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES
RE. THE 3 APRIL 2005 CONFERENCE ON
"DEMOCRATIC DISCOURSE IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY"

60 to 65

Some ~~55 to 50~~ years ago, courageous diplomats from over one dozen countries risked their careers, and sometimes their lives, to rescue antifascist and Jewish refugees from capture by the Nazis and their collaborators. The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies is proud to join the Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University and Concordia University in honoring these individuals by organizing a conference on "Democratic Discourse in A Multicultural Society."

Issues central to the legacy of the diplomats honoured today that will be examined at the conference include:

- "Is individual courage enough to eliminate the scourges of genocide and crimes against humanity today?" Major Brent Beardsley, a graduate of Sir George Williams University and General Romeo Dallaire's aide in Rwanda, will address this question on April 3rd, highlighting the humanitarian interventions needed to prevent more Rwandas in Darfur and the Congo.

- "What are the major forms of altruism in history?" and "How can we promote the courage to care?" will be discussed by Professor Lawrence Baron of San Diego State University, the editor of *Embracing the Other: Philosophical, Psychological, and Historical Perspectives on Altruism.*

- Student activism and the role of debate on public issues in Canadian universities will be examined by University of Toronto student leader Kartick Kumar, founder of the Cambodian Genocide Group.

Today, graduates of Concordia's courses and programmes on the history and sociology of genocide and human rights are serving with the United Nations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Canadian Forces and SFOR in Sarajevo, the Canadian Embassy in Haiti, and the Quebec Mission in Washington, DC, among others. "Shake Hands with the Devil," the audience award winning film at this year's Sundance Film Festival, bears the creative stamp of one of our graduate students, Patrick Reed. Concordia University is a world leader in education about the history and sociology of genocide. The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies is the fruit of nearly 20 years of quiet, unheralded support of our work by Concordia University.

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8 March 2005